

CHOICE TEACHING FOR THE CHOSEN NO. 2606

**A SERMON
INTENDED FOR READING ON LORD'S-DAY, JANUARY 22, 1899
DELIVERED BY C. H. SPURGEON
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*"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God.
Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."
John 6:45*

I SUPPOSE that you never noticed any great literary excellence in Bradshaw's Railway Guide. "No," you say, "fine writing would be very much out of place in such a book as that. It is meant to be a plain direction to travelers. When we consult it, we do not wish to be entertained, we want to be guided as to the best and quickest route to our desired destination." Well, that is the sort of sermon I am going to try to preach, one which, I trust, shall be a guide to heaven to some who hear it or who may afterwards read it. I long, above all things, that through my words many may find rest and peace in Jesus Christ our Lord.

Notice, dear friends, what our Savior was aiming at in this discourse. The Jews had been murmuring at Him. Certain followers of the scribes and Pharisees, who always opposed Him, had been whispering among themselves and finding fault with Him. Our Lord did not descend to come down to their platform and parley with them.

They pretended that their difficulty was that He was well-known among them, that He was the son of Joseph the carpenter, and that they knew His mother, and His brothers and sisters. Our Lord does not appear directly to answer them, but He takes quite a different tack. He says, "Murmur not among yourselves about this matter. Do not imagine for a moment that I am disappointed because you do not believe in Me, and do not suppose that your unbelief will at all frustrate My Father's purpose or surprise Him. You may reject Me if you are determined to do so, but your folly and sin will make no difference to anybody except yourselves. On your own head shall be the guilt of your own blood. I knew that you would not believe in Me. I quite expected that you would not receive Me, for 'No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.'"

And beloved, in a similar manner, when we are pleading with you that you should believe in Christ, we must weep over you as Jesus wept over Jerusalem, and we may say, as Paul wrote to the Thessalonians, "We were gentle among you, even as a nurse cherisheth her children," but when you come to this terrible decision, that you reject Christ and will not have Him reign over you, then we fall back upon the eternal purposes of God, and we tell you that you have not received either the electing love of God or the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, and you are left to perish in your sins.

To the ungodly and the unspiritual this may sound like rather harsh language, but should not men be treated with some measure of harshness if they spurn the Christ who is set before them and in their unbelief wickedly reject Him? True love is all the more loving because it is outspoken and sometimes seems even severe.

There is a spurious sort of love current, nowadays, which consists in saying, "Ah, yes. you are all right and I am all right. You say, 'No,' and I say, 'Yes,' but no doubt, we are both equally correct. You are black and I am white—or I am black and you are white—but in these days, black is white and white is no color at all. Let us make things smooth and pleasant all round. You praise me and I will praise you. It does not really matter what you believe or what you think, we shall all get right at last."

That kind of talk, or the preaching which comes practically to the same point, is infernal cruelty to immortal souls. I dare not use a milder term to describe it. It may be cried up as charity, but there is no charity in it. It is a shameful selfishness which, for the sake of ease and popular favor, cries, "Peace, peace, when there is no peace," and seduces men to their own destruction, playing to them merry tunes when, all the while, they are dancing down to death and to hell.

Our Lord Jesus Christ was not a preacher of that order. When men refused Him, He flashed the red light of truth in their faces and made them know that if they rejected Him, they rejected their only hope of mercy, and if they turned against His grace, it was because they did not know its power and were not under its influence.

He taught these people, who murmured at Him, that they never would believe in Him unless the Father taught them. He plainly declared that the Father would teach all His own and that if those who were listening to Him did not come to Him, it would prove that the Father had not taught them, that they were not God's chosen, and therefore, they would perish in their carnal and guilty ignorance of Christ.

Now coming to the text, I shall ask you to notice, first, *the promise of the Father's teaching of His own people*. "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God." Then, secondly, we shall examine *the teaching itself*. "They shall be all taught of God." And thirdly, we shall consider *the grand result of the teaching*. "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

I. To begin, then, there is, in the text, THE PROMISE OF THE FATHER'S TEACHING OF HIS OWN PEOPLE.

Christ says, concerning this promise, "It is written in the prophets." I greatly admire that sentence, because if there was ever anyone in this world who might have spoken on His own authority, without quoting Scripture, it was our Lord Jesus Christ. "In him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily," and therefore, all His sayings are the utterances of omnipotence.

And He often, when upon the earth, made use of that great double Amen, "Verily, verily, I say unto you." Yet this divine Teacher, who spake as never man spake, continually quoted from the Old Testament and supported His own teachings by quotations from "the law and the prophets," and the psalmists and other inspired writers.

In this case, addressing Himself to the Jews, He says, "It is written in the prophets." The tendency, nowadays, even among preachers, is to depreciate and dishonor Holy Scripture. I am often saddened as I find how many are caviling at one part or another of the Sacred Word. To my heart, there is nothing more authoritative or more conclusive than this little sentence, "It is written."

If God's message to men is written, that is enough for me—and my great concern shall be to find out what that message really is. Every man must have infallibility somewhere. Some find it in the Pope, but I frankly confess that I have never seen the slightest sign of it there. Some find it in what they call, "the church." I am sure I do not know in which church to look for it, for all of them seem to me to be very, very fallible.

I find infallibility in the inspired Word of God. Here is a harbor where I can drop down my anchor, feeling certain that it will hold. Here is a place where I can find sure footing, and by the grace of God, from this confidence I shall never be moved. "It is written in the prophets," is quite enough for me. I trust, beloved, that it is also sufficient for all of you.

That we may learn the lesson that our Lord intended to teach, let us look at the words which He quoted. He said, "It is written in the prophets." And truly, the passage or its equivalent may be found in more places than I shall be able to refer to now, but will you kindly look first to the fifty-fourth chapter of Isaiah, at the thirteenth verse?

Ah! I see the eyes of you Bible-lovers flash and I think I hear you say, "Fifty-fourth of Isaiah? Why, of course, that follows just after the fifty-third of Isaiah!" Precisely so, and that fifty-third of Isaiah, as you well know, is all about *Christ's substitutionary sacrifice*. There we have the full-length portrait of

the bleeding Substitute, “But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.”

Many of you know by heart that blessed chapter, so full of the doctrine of God laying upon Christ the sin of His people, and of Christ bearing all their iniquities, that they might be forever free. Well, immediately after that great central truth of the Christian faith, comes this fifty-fourth chapter, “Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child,” For there is no better place for any to sing than at the foot of the cross, gazing by faith upon the crucified Savior.

O earth, with all your barrenness. O heart of steel, with all your hardness. “Break forth into singing,” for there is heavenly joy and there is the promise of heaven itself in the death of Him who lived, and loved, and died for us!

Further on in the fifty-fourth chapter comes this thirteenth verse, from which our Savior quoted, “And all thy children shall be taught of the LORD; and great shall be the peace of thy children.” This is *a promise to the Lord's own people*. The teaching of Scripture is that Christ died for His chosen. “Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it.”

God’s promise, “All thy children shall be taught of the LORD,” is made to His own church and to all who are the children of that church, namely, all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life. All God’s chosen, all whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book of Life, all whom Christ has redeemed by His blood, shall be, each according to his measure, in due time taught of the Lord.

That is the meaning of the promise as we get it in Isaiah’s prophecy. First, it follows the doctrine of substitution, and next, it is made to God’s chosen people.

Now will you turn over a few pages in your Bible and read what is written in the thirty-first chapter of the prophecy of Jeremiah, beginning at the thirty-first verse? “Behold, the days come, saith the LORD, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was an husband unto them, saith the LORD: but this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the LORD: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the LORD: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more.”

So, you see, *this promise is joined with other blessings of the new covenant*. Notice that when our Savior quoted the prophecy, He commenced with the word “and.” Now, as a general rule, when you make a quotation, you do not begin with “and.” That is a copulative conjunction which joins one sentence to another, yet our Lord begins with an “and,” as if to hint that there was a great deal going before it of which He could not speak fully just then.

There is “an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure,” which God has made with Christ Jesus His Son on our behalf, and all who were represented by Christ became, by virtue of their union with Him, partakers in all the blessings of that covenant. Our side of it has been fulfilled by Christ our Representative. He has done the Father’s will perfectly and He has been able to say concerning the part entrusted to Him, “It is finished.”

The side of the covenant which has yet to be fulfilled is God the Father’s portion, and that runs thus, “I will, and they shall”—“I will be their God, and they shall be my people. I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me. I will instruct them so that they shall not need to have anyone to say to them, ‘Know the LORD,’ for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them.” What a wonderful promise this is! It is perfectly unconditional and freely made by the Father concerning all His chosen.

As it stands in these two prophecies, as our Savior quotes it, *it is a promise made to each individual of the chosen seed.* "They shall be *all* taught of God." Then there shall not be one true child of God who shall not be taken into the Lord's school, and be taught and trained by the Divine Father.

Perhaps someone asks the very important question, "Do I belong to that blessed number?" Let me reply by making another inquiry, Have *you* been truly taught of the Lord? If so, you do belong to the chosen company. If you have not been taught of the Lord, I cannot tell whether you are His or not. None of us can climb to heaven and unroll the eternal parchments, to tell whose name is written there. And until there is some open and overt evidence of your being the Lord's, I cannot declare that you are.

But by this test shall you know it—if you have been taught of the Lord, you are one of His children, you are in the covenant of grace, and you shall have your full share of every good thing which the Lord has there laid up for His own.

That, then, is the promise of the Father's teaching.

II. Now, in the second place, let us briefly examine THE TEACHING ITSELF. "They shall be all taught of God."

I want you to notice, first, that *this teaching is, practically, the same thing as God's drawing.* Let me read the previous verse. "No man can come to me, except the Father which has sent me draw him. And they shall be all taught of God." The way in which God draws men to Christ is not merely by persuasion, but by instruction.

The Father does not draw us to Christ by a force which is contrary to our nature and will—we are not stocks and stones, and He does not treat us as if we were. We are rational, responsible, free agents, and He deals with us as such, never snapping even the finest strings in the instrument of human nature, so far as it is human nature. So, when He draws men, He draws them by teaching them.

I will show you how the Lord does this. He first teaches the poor soul what a great sinner he is and that makes him look out for a great Savior. He teaches that poor sinner the impossibility of his being saved by his own works, and that makes him look for the works of somebody else. He teaches that poor sinner that He has authorized Christ to stand in his stead, and by His life and death, to meet all the law's demands on that sinner's behalf. And the poor sinner says, "Why, that is exactly what I want!"

So, while the Lord teaches him, He is really drawing him, and in like manner, there ought to be a great deal of teaching in all our attempts to draw men to Christ—I mean, in our efforts to be the instruments of drawing them. If I stand here and simply shout, "Believe, Believe, Believe," I cannot expect that any good and lasting result will come of my shouting.

I must tell people what they are to believe. I may try to persuade men to do this and to do that, and there may be great force in the persuasion, but unless they understand the reason for my pleading, little will come of it. God's way of working should be our way of working and He draws men by teaching them. Observe that very carefully.

Now notice what kind of teaching is here promised. *It is divine teaching.* "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." "They shall be all taught of God." There is no teaching but that which will ever save the soul. My dear hearer, you may listen to the best preacher who ever lived, but unless God shall apply the truth to your heart, you will not receive it.

You may study the best books on theology as long as you like, but unless God the Holy Spirit shall give you the keys of this treasure house, you will never get at its precious things and secure them as your own. Means are to be used—as I will show you in a minute or two—but you must not trust in the means, you must not even rely on the best study that you can give to the Word of God itself as the sure means of your knowing the truth.

Over and above all that, you need the instruction and illumination of the Holy Spirit. "He shall teach you all things." But unless you have His teaching, you cannot and you will not know the truth. I would like, if I could, to unlearn everything concerning the things of God that I have taught myself. I desire with all my heart that all I know may be what I have learned of the Spirit of God.

And dear soul, if ever you are to come to Christ, you will have to unlearn a great deal that you have been teaching yourself, for nothing will be of any real worth to you in the matter of your eternal salvation but what the Holy Ghost Himself shall write on your heart and teach you. So, the promise of the text concerns divine teaching.

Yet, notice also, that it *is teaching through the usual means*. "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Though my hearing will not save me, yet, ordinarily, it is the channel by which God's Spirit works to the saving of the soul.

Though my reading of the Scripture will not, of itself, save me, yet it is the usual way by which God enlightens the understanding through the Holy Spirit. Never neglect the means of grace, I pray you, but at the same time, never get into the condition that some are in who feel quite happy so long as they have been to a place of worship on Sunday, and who return home and go to bed, just as if they had done all their duty for the day and had no need of anything further.

They are like men who go to market, but do not buy anything. Or like persons who go into a field, but do not work in it. They are quite satisfied with having been to the market or the field. It must not be so with you, dear hearers. If you want to find Christ, if you want to go to heaven when you die, never be satisfied with mere hearing of the Word, but pray God the Holy Ghost that, through the hearing, you may be taught of the Lord.

The most blessed thing about this divine teaching is that *it is effectual teaching*. If you are taught by the ablest divine, you may yet learn nothing. But if you are taught of God, you will really know what you do learn. If He teaches you what your sin really is, you will know it—perhaps even to despair. If He teaches you the meaning of His law, you will know it as you lie at the foot of Sinai trembling. And if He teaches you the fullness of Christ, you will know that and you will rejoice that He is just such a Christ as you want.

Men are sure to learn whatever God teaches them by His Holy Spirit. There shall not be one who shall pass through His school and yet remain a fool. Though they were all fools when they entered it, yet, ere they leave it, they shall be so instructed as to the way of holiness that they shall not err therein.

My heart continues praying even while I am preaching, "Lord, teach me," and then it adds, "and Lord, teach these people, too. Come Thou and be their instructor, for what can they know except that which You do teach them?"

III. So I shall conclude with this last point—THE GRAND RESULT OF THIS TEACHING.

We have read the promise of the teaching. We have thought over what kind of teaching it is. Now let us inquire—What is the result of it? "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

Some men say that they have been taught of God and then they go on to prove that what they know is of their own inventing. Our Lord's test concerning His disciples is, "By their fruits ye shall know them," and this is the fruit—every man who has heard the Word, and who has been taught of the Father, comes to Christ.

Therefore, if any man preaches that which does not lead you to Christ, do not listen to it, for evidently he has not been taught of God. And if you find in any book teaching which makes you think less of Christ than you did before, burn the book. It will do you no good and it may do you a great deal of mischief.

All sound teaching leads to Christ, for if, when the Father Himself is the Teacher, the consummation of our scholarship is that we come to Christ. Surely, when we poor creatures are the teachers, we must be even more bound to begin and end with Christ crucified. You were asking me just now whether you had been taught of the Father, you wanted to know whether you were one of His children. Well, here is the test, have you come to Christ? If so, you have been taught of God.

Coming to Christ is a very simple thing. It is the easiest thing in all the world, yet no man ever performed it until God the Father instructed him and taught him that sacred art. To wash in Jordan was a

very simple thing, yet at first proud Naaman would not do it, but he turned away in a rage. To believe in Jesus is a very simple thing—little children have believed in Him, persons who have scarcely been intellectually above an idiot have, nevertheless, been able to believe in Jesus.

And yet, with all its simplicity, men never exercise it until they have been taught of the Father. I suppose it is because faith is so easy that they despise it. Naaman's servants said to him, "If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?"

And it is only when the Divine Spirit humbles the heart and makes the man feel that he must stoop to anything so long as he may but be saved, that, at last, he goes down to wash in Jordan according to the saying of the man of God, or to believe in Jesus Christ according to the command of the Gospel.

You are taught of the Lord, my dear hearer, if you believe in Jesus Christ, that is, *if you come and trust Him*. And if you do not trust Christ, you may be a Doctor of Divinity, but you have never been taught of the Lord. He is not to you "very God of very God," your sole and only Savior. If you do not trust Christ, you are a stranger to the light divine—that assuredly must be the case. You cannot be right in the rest, unless you are trusting in Him, but if you are truly believing in Him, then you are taught of the Lord.

It is very wonderful how God brings His people to this point of trusting Jesus. I heard a little story which might have fitted very well into my morning sermon [Sermon #1745, Abijah—Or Some Good Thing Towards the Lord], but it was told to me after I had finished my discourse, so I will repeat it to you now. In a London court, there was a little girl who had been to Sunday school and who had found Christ as her Savior.

She heard that there was a poor woman lying very ill and all alone, up two flights of stairs, so the child went up to the room, just pushed the door open, but did not show herself, and said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." A nurse came in the afternoon to attend to the poor creature and she fetched in a city missionary to see the woman, for she talked so strangely, the nurse thought.

When the good man came in, the woman said, "I am so happy, I am believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, and I am saved. An angel came to the door and I heard him speak, and he said, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved,' and I did believe on Him and I am saved." It was not an angel at all, it was that little girl, but it did not matter in the least who said it, for it was just as true whether an angel or a child spoke the words.

I long that God should lead you, my dear friend, to feel, "It does not matter how the Gospel comes to me, for if it is true, I believe it and I accept the Christ whom it makes known to me." Some of you probably think that if an angel were to come flying through the Tabernacle, and were to alight just against your seat and say to you, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," you would believe at once, but it would not make any difference in your believing, would it?

It is the same message as I, who am indeed in the Scriptural sense one of the angels of the churches, put before you. You do not mind who brings the letter that is full of good news. I never trouble to send out to inquire the color of the postman's hair, if he brings me a letter. I take it and read its contents, and you need not stop to ask whether the message comes to you by an angel, or a babe, or a minister, or whoever it is.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." And if you do believe on Him, then I know that the Father taught you, I am persuaded that you are one of God's elect, and I can turn and say to you, "Yes, though I have not read the secret roll of the redeemed, if you believe in Christ, your name is there." For there never was a soul yet that came to Christ except the Father drew him, and the Father never drew one by mistake and He never will do so. This is the blessed consummation of all God's teaching, that the taught ones come to Christ.

But notice, ere I close, that the Lord says, "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." He does not merely come once, but *he keeps on coming*. Do not make any mistake about faith in Christ, as if it were one single act and then were done with. The faith that saves

the soul is an all-the-day faith and an every-day faith. If you believe in Christ, your faith must be of the kind that believes today, tomorrow, and forever.

If you say, "I believe that I believed in Christ twenty years ago and therefore I am saved," I do not believe anything of the kind. Unless you believe still, you did never truly believed in Christ Jesus, for the faith that God works in the soul is a continual faith. It has its ups and downs—sometimes, like the moon, it is eclipsed. But it comes out of the darkness again and shines as brightly as ever.

And further, if you did ever really believe in Christ, you believe in Him now. "To whom coming," says the apostle, not, "having once come to Christ, we now run from Him." But "to whom coming," always coming, always trusting, always believing. And why is this? Because we are always being taught of the Father.

I trusted Christ when I knew comparatively little of God's Word and I confess that I still know but very little of its boundless height, and depth, and length, and breadth, but I believe that as I grow to know more and more, I shall trust more. If that is not the result of your knowledge, it is not the knowledge that the Holy Ghost gives you.

It is the knowledge that puffs up. If it were the Holy Ghost's teaching, you would rely more and more upon Christ, and rest more entirely on Him. I pray for you, my dearly-beloved fellow church members, that you and I may be taught of God till we grow less and less, and come to be nothing at all in our own esteem, till we vanish away into Christ, and Christ becomes more than our necessary food, our life, our joy, our All-in-all.

Everyone who is taught of the Father, in proportion as he is so taught, comes nearer and nearer to Christ, until *he comes perfectly to Christ in the glory yet to be revealed*. O blessed Master, we are still coming to You. We are every day coming nearer to You. Your Spirit is making us more like You and making us long more for You!

Your Father is creating in us more and more of a hungering and thirsting after You. Though we are very lame and do sadly limp, yet still we are coming to You. We can only feebly fly, yet still we are flying towards You, and we expect that, when You shall appear, and sit upon the great white throne, You will recognize that we are coming to You, and You Yourself will say to us, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

We are coming, Lord, to You. Come Thou Thyself to us. "Yea, come quickly; even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen and Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

JOHN 6:25-51

These people had crossed the Sea of Galilee and gone to Capernaum, "seeking for Jesus." It seemed a very hopeful sign that they should be willing to make such efforts to find Christ, but see how the Lord Jesus Himself regarded it.

Verses 25-26. *And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, when camest thou hither? Jesus answered them and said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled.*

What very plain talk this is! Our Lord does not try to gain popularity by the concealment of truth, but He tells these people to their faces, "You are only following Me because of what you get out of Me." "Oh!" some worldly-wise man would have said, "that is a very imprudent speech. It will drive the people away."

Just so and Christ seemed to say, on more than one occasion, "If people will be driven away by the truth, let them be driven away." John the Baptist had declared that Christ had His fan in His hand and that He would thoroughly purge His floor. And if that floor is to be purged, there must be a driving away

of the chaff. Our Lord's example should teach us to speak in His name nothing less and nothing more than the truth in all love and kindness.

After thus pointing out the true motive which made the people seek Him, our Savior uttered a very singular paradox—

27. Labour not for the meat which perisheth, but for that meat which endureth unto everlasting life, which the Son of man shall give unto you: for him hath God the Father sealed.

Is it not strange that Christ says, "Labour not for the very thing which you cannot get without labouring for it" and then He says, "Labour for that which you cannot get by labouring for it"? He virtually tells us that it is so, by adding the words, "which the Son of Man shall give unto you," plainly proving that it does not come as the result of human labor, but as the free gift of the Son of God. He that is wise will spell out the meaning of the paradox, but he that is blind will stumble over the letter of it and not discern the spiritual interpretation.

28. Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God?

"We want to do the best works, the noblest works, the most acceptable works in all the world. Tell us what we should do in order to perform a Godlike work."

29. Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God,—

"The highest and best work which you can accomplish is"—

29. That ye believe on him whom he hath sent.

Faith is the noblest of the graces. It is the very essence of true worship. It contains within itself the germs of all excellence, and the man who believes in Christ has done that which is more pleasing to God than anything else in all the world.

30-31. They said therefore unto him, What sign shewest thou then, that we may see, and believe thee? what dost thou work? Our fathers did eat manna in the desert; as it is written, He gave them bread from heaven to eat.

Do you see the drift of their talk? They are still looking after the loaves and fishes, and therefore, whatever Christ may say, they turn the discourse round that way. If they can get from Christ something to eat, they will believe in Him—what groveling, earth-bound creatures they were!

32-33. Then Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Moses gave you not that bread from heaven; but my Father giveth you the true bread from heaven. For the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.

"The best and noblest bread—the bread which has Deity in it—the bread which can feed your souls, and sustain you with everlasting life, 'the bread of God is he which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.'"

34. Then said they unto him, Lord, give us this bread.

They said this not knowing what they said, and not understanding what He meant. Bread for the body was all that they wanted. Their cry was, "Give us bread, and we are content." They had no spiritual appetite for Christ, "the bread of God."

35-36. And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst. But I said unto you, That ye also have seen me, and believe not.

These were the very people whom He had fed on the other side of the sea, yet they were craving for more. That kind of bread cannot stay their hunger for long. They had not received Him as their Savior, else they would have been well-content with Him and would have asked for nothing more.

37-39. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.

Christ will not lose one whom the Father gave Him, nay, nor any part of one. He will not lose the body of any one of His people any more than He will lose the soul of one.

40. *And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*

Christ will never have finished His work upon believers till He has raised their bodies from the grave and glorified them like His own resurrection body. He will never cease from the work which He has commenced on any of His people till He has laid the topstone in the glorious perfections of heaven. And this truth is the joy of our hearts even now.

41. *The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.*

They muttered, murmured, whispered, growled amongst themselves at this saying of Christ.

42. *And they said, Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? how is it then that he saith, I came down from heaven?*

This is just the way with men—they judge by outward appearances, and if the Gospel comes to them as a thing beloved of poor men, if it be preached without much eloquence, if the service be without the attractions of sweet music, or of gaudy attire, straightway they say there can be nothing in it. O blind bats, when God veils Himself in human flesh, can it be otherwise?

43. *Jesus therefore answered and said unto them, Murmur not among yourselves.*

“I never thought you would believe in Me. I never imagined that I should win your confidence.”

44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:*

“You are not drawn unto Me, therefore it is clear that you are not the subjects of divine grace. You think you are judging Me, but in so doing you are really judging and condemning yourselves.” Whenever men sit in judgment on the Gospel, they soon let us know what kind of spirit possesses them. It is not Christ who is on trial—it is they, themselves—and when they rail at Him, they do but prove that the grace of the Father has never drawn them to Him. “No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him:”

44-46. *And I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me. Not that any man hath seen the Father, save he which is of God, he hath seen the Father.*

“Do not suppose that, even when you are taught of God, you will know the Father as I know Him or see Him as I have seen Him.” That divine glance at Deity is not for us.

47. *Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.*

This was how our Lord spoke straight to the faces of those who had derided Him and said, “Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know?” With the strongest asseveration which He was in the habit of using, He says, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life.”

48-51. *I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.*

HYMNS FROM OUR OWN HYMN BOOK—369, 459, 235

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